

CITY OF HELENA



Position Title: Paralegal

Department: City Attorney

FLSA: Non-exempt

Job Purpose

The purpose of this position is to perform a variety of professional duties involved in assisting attorneys in providing a full range of legal services related to municipal government operations. The position drafts and preliminarily reviews legal documents; assists in budget preparation for the office; oversees general administrative operations and functions of the City Attorney's Office including record retention and disposal; and provides information, direction, and assistance to staff, other departments, outside agencies and the general public. The position completes these responsibilities in support of the City Attorney's Office in the delivery of legal services which include civil litigation, criminal misdemeanor prosecution, and legal advice to the various city departments, the Helena City Commission, and various city boards.

Essential Duties: *These job functions are the essential duties of the position and are not all-inclusive of all the duties the incumbent may be assigned.*

Legal Drafting and Review: This position will assist attorneys in the office, both civil and criminal, in performing of their duties by preparing and reviewing criminal and civil legal documents such as draft pleadings, briefs, motions, proposed court orders, deeds, easements, agreements, ordinances, and resolutions. In addition, this position is responsible for responding to routine information requests and questions about legal processes and policies of the city which includes drafting correspondence for attorney signature. This position will also assist other city departments by reviewing and analyzing reports from other departments requesting ordinances, resolutions, agreements and other legal documents; determining the type of document needed, obtaining necessary information; and preparing the draft documents requested for attorney review; reviewing agreements prepared by other departments for appropriateness, accuracy, and compliance with legal requirements, city policy, and provision of adequate liability insurance and workers' compensation coverage. Finally, the position is responsible for helping prepare and review documents effecting particular land and as such must be able to research, review, and understand property descriptions from previously recorded instruments, plats and certificates of survey; understand difference between types of deeds, easements and other transfer instruments; select and draft appropriate type of document; prepare closing documents for land transactions.

Administrative: This position is responsible for assisting the City Attorney in assuring efficient office operations by helping establish and maintain office policies that facilitate such operations. This responsibility includes meeting with staff to identify and resolve problems; training assigned staff; coordinating and assigning work activities and projects; monitoring work flow; reviewing and evaluating work products, methods, and procedures; recommending improvements in workflow, procedures, and use of equipment and forms; coordinating, monitoring, and participating in meetings, special projects, assignments and activities. This position also assists with preparing and monitoring the office budget including analyzing and determining annual budget needs, revenue requests for designated accounts, and monitoring expenditures to verify fund balances and proper accounts of the approved budget. Lastly, this position serves as a primary resource and information source regarding office policies, procedures, objectives, and operational functions. This function includes receiving and interviewing office visitors and telephone callers; answering questions and providing information where judgment, knowledge, and interpretations are utilized; resolving complaints; referring callers and visitors to appropriate sources as necessary. The person in this position must be able to establish, maintain and foster positive and

harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work and be able to complete work assignments, including legal drafting and review projects, while performing all of the above administrative functions.

Clerical: This position is responsible for a number of clerical activities. The primary clerical responsibility is to establish and implement an effective records management and retention program, that encompasses both physical and electronic files many of which are highly confidential, that allows for easy archival and retrieval of records and complies with all applicable record retention rules, laws, and regulations. This position is also responsible for maintaining calendars and appointments for the office and its staff; arranging meetings, conferences and other functions for the attorneys; coordinating activities with other departments, divisions, the public and outside agencies; preparing, reviewing, and processing claims; validating coding of claims; ordering, receiving, inventorying, storing, and distributing supplies, forms, and related items; preparing purchase orders; contacting vendors and suppliers as needed; maintaining related records.

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Related to this Position:

Knowledge of:

- Basic operational characteristics, services, and activities of a municipal law department.
- Principles and applications of civil, criminal and administrative law.
- Understanding of workings of courts and filing of court pleadings.
- Legal terminology, procedures, and technology.
- Modern office administrative management practices and methods.
- Modern office equipment including computer equipment and applicable software programs.
- English language usage, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.
- Principles and procedures of record keeping and filing systems for both physical and electronic records.
- Record retention laws.
- Basic mathematical principles.
- Principles and practices used in dealing with the public.

Skill or ability to:

- Type and enter data at a speed necessary for successful job performance.
- Learn, interpret, and apply the policies, procedures, laws, codes, and regulations pertaining to assigned programs and functions.
- Prepare drafts of legally significant documents for attorney review, both from scratch and by using templates.
- Use independent judgment to respond to and assist with a wide variety of issues dealing with multiple subject matters and varying degree of complexity.
- Perform general clerical work involving the use of independent judgment and personal initiative.
- Respond to inquiries and requests for information regarding policies and procedures.
- Prepare and maintain accurate and complete records.
- Research, collect, compile, and analyze information and data.
- Prepare and administer budgets.
- Plan and organize work to meet schedules and deadlines.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Physical Demands:

Ability to work in a standard office environment. Mobility to work in a typical office setting and use standard office equipment, vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, and hearing and speech to communicate in person or over the telephone. Requires the ability to move or lift documents and materials weighing up to 30 pounds.

Minimum Qualifications (Education, Experience and Training):

This position requires an Associates degree in legal studies or related field and a minimum of five years of increasingly responsible paralegal, legal administrative, clerical, and drafting and review experience. Other relevant combinations of education and work experience may be considered on an individual basis.

The incumbent must possess a paralegal certificate or related degree.

Supervision Received:

Supervised by the City Attorney

Supervision Exercised:

None

License or Certificate:

Must possess a valid driver's license with acceptable driving record at the time of hire and have the ability to obtain a valid MT driver's license within six months of hire.

The specific statements shown in each section of this position description are not intended to be all inclusive. They represent typical elements and criteria considered necessary to perform the job successfully.